

LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Henry J. Mroz Administration Office
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

John J. Leahy
Mayor and Chairperson

Andre P. Descoteaux
Vice-Chairperson

Hilary Clark
Michael Dillon Jr.
Dominik Lay
Connie A. Martin

Human Resources & Labor Relations
Subcommittee Meeting

Thursday, June 10, 2021
City Hall – Council Chamber
6:00 p.m.

Tel: (978) 674-4324
Fax: (978) 937-7609

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|--------------------------------------|---|
| Subcommittee Members Present: | Chairperson Hilary Clark, Andy Descoteaux and Connie Martin |
| School Committee Members Present: | Mayor Leahy, Mr. Dillon and Mr. Lay |
| School Department Personnel Present: | Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Hall, Chief Operating Officer Ms. Robin Desmond, Chief Academic Officer Ms. Turner, Chief Financial Officer Ms. Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement Officer Dr. Linus Guillory, Chief Schools Officer Mr. Liam Skinner, Principal, Daley School |

Chairperson Clark called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. The following agenda item was discussed:

- 1. Review of Job Description for Chief Academic Officer**
- 2. Review of Job Descriptions Currently in Suspense Account**

Chairperson Clark opened the meeting and the Subcommittee reviewed the job description of the Chief Academic Officer.

Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to recommend moving forward with the Job Description for Chief Academic Officer as written to the Committee as a Whole; seconded by Ms. Martin. 3 yeas APPROVED

Dr. Hall addressed the Subcommittee and provided a PowerPoint presentation that included the following topics:

- Virtual Academy
- Support for Renaissance Schools
- Dropout Prevention
- Support for Parents and Families
- Professional Learning and Operational Support

The presentation stated that the Virtual Academy that Lowell Public Schools is proposing a new school, not a new program. The proposed school will run a well-developed, high-quality virtual school for grades 7 through 12. The proposed school will be subject to the state accountability system. Since returning to in-person learning in April, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has recognized that some families may continue to desire a virtual option, as well as a small subset of secondary students that have been reported to perform at a higher level within the remote setting.

Ms. Martin asked how many students would be attending.

Ms. Desmond stated that they're estimating 150 – 400 students. Ms. Desmond stated that it's still in the application process so the numbers are just estimations.

Mr. Descoteaux asked how long the application process takes.

Ms. Desmond stated that she just received feedback from the state and she will be resubmitting next week, although it doesn't officially need to be in until July 1, 2021.

Mr. Dillon asked if we can enroll students in virtual school elsewhere.

Ms. Desmond stated that the school we are designing will only be for Lowell Public School students. There are two (2) virtual schools that we could enroll in.

Ms. Martin stated that getting actual numbers will help the Committee make a better decision.

Ms. Martin made a motion to hold the Virtual School is abeyance until the Committee receives more information; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

The PowerPoint presentation continued and stated that the Renaissance Network is a strategy to support our chronically underperforming schools. Schools are assigned to the network based on DESE accountability percentiles. The schools within the network require differentiated services and supports to address and narrow long-standing achievement, performance and opportunity gaps.

The following resources were recommended to improve support for students at our Renaissance Schools:

- School Climate Specialists (one (1) per school, except LHS)
- Data Inquiry Facilitators (one (1) per two schools)
- Academic Coaches (1 per two schools)
- Bilingual Family Liaisons (1 per school, except LHS)
- Associate Head of School (LHS only)

Mr. Skinner stated that there is a need for Climate Specialists at these schools.

Mr. Descoteaux stated that it sounds like the Climate Specialists are the same as Social Workers and he believes we need to put people in to support our students.

Mr. Skinner stated that he is not minimizing Social Workers and that the teachers really like the Climate Specialists.

Ms. Martin stated that she would rather see a Social Worker due to their depth, experience and licensure.

Ms. Clark stated that she supports these positions and defers to the Principals and what they say there is a need for.

Ms. Martin made a motion to eliminate the School Climate Specialists, Data Inquiry Facilitators, Academic Coaches and Bilingual Family Liaisons from the Renaissance School Packet in the Suspense Account and return the funds to the Renaissance School Site Councils; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to ask the Administration to come back with a revised job description for the School Climate Specialists that includes licensure; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to move forward with the Associate Head of School job description as written; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

The PowerPoint presentation then addressed the Student Resource Center which was recommended to recruit and re-engage students who have dropped out of school through direct outreach to students, families and community-based organizations while also coordinating and aligning services in the District's alternative school portfolio to better meet the needs of our most at-risk students. The current district-wide dropout rate is over 9% with more than 350 students who are estimated to currently reside within the district, who are school-aged, haven't obtained a diploma or GED and are not currently enrolled in any school or academic program. The following resources were recommended to improve support for students:

- Director of Alternative Education (Restored)
- Student Outreach Liaison
- Clerk (Student Resource Center)

Ms. Desmond stated they're looking to make it a more robust program and that percentages have been increasing.

Mr. Descoteaux asked how many liaisons we are looking at and that one (1) liaison is not enough.

Ms. Desmond stated presently we are only adding one (1).

A Parent Leadership Institute was recommended to increase family literacy through centrally-coordinated, school-based morning, evening and weekend workshops and learning events for parents, guardians and families of students. The Institute will deliver evidence-based, high impact programming to parents to empower them to become advocates for their children's education and to become stronger partners with their schools. The following resources were being recommended to improve services to families:

- Director of the Parent Leadership Institute
- Parent/Family Advocate (Position located at the Family Resource Center)

Ms. Martin stated that we need more information regarding the Program Director.

Ms. Martin made a motion to revise the Parent/Family Advocate job description as well as the engagement plan; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

The following positions were also being recommended to support professional learning and districtwide operations:

- Director of Technology (Restored)
- Deputy Chief Academic Officer
- Coordinator of Culturally and Linguistically Sustaining Practices
- Coordinator of Research and Accountability (Restored)
- Assistant to the Director of Facilities

Chairperson Clark made a motion to remove the Director of Technology from the Suspense Account and to move forward with restoring the position; seconded by Ms. Martin. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to table the Deputy Chief Academic Chair and move the funds to the supply line; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to send the Coordinator of Research & Accountability to the Suspense Account; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Martin made a motion to send the Assistant to the Director of Facilities to the Suspense Account; seconded by Mr. Descoteaux. 3 yeas APPROVED

**Mr. Descoteaux made a motion to adjourn at 8:39 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Martin. 3 yeas
APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. James P. Hall, Chief Operating
Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd,
Superintendent and Secretary, Lowell
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JPH/mes

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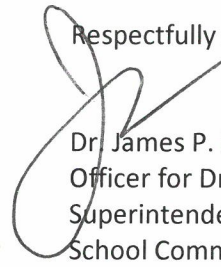
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